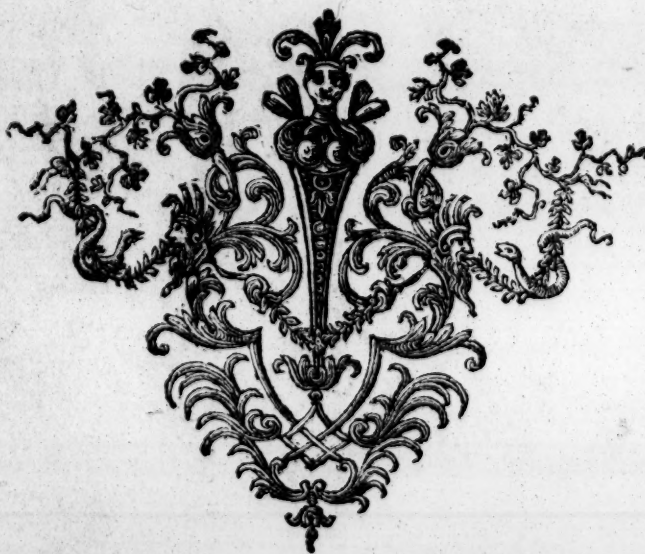


SEVERAL
ACTS
OF THE
WRITERS
TO
His Majesty's Signet.



EDINBURGH:
Printed by T. W. and T. RUDDIMANS,
M. DCC. XLIV.

SEVERAL

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THE



WRITERS

TO

His Majesty's Signer



EDINBURGH

Printed by J. W. and T. R. D. G. W. A. S.

M. DCC. XLV.



Apud EDINBURGUM vigesimo secundo die mensis Januarii, anno Domini millesimo sexcentesimo sexagesimo sexto.



THE which Day the Commissioners, and whole Body of the Writers to his Majesty's Signet, being met in the outward House of the Parliament or New Session-house of *Edinburgh*, for the common Affairs of their Society, it was represented by their Procurator-fiscal, and some of their Brethren, as it had been at former Meetings, That albeit there was an Act made upon the 4th of *November* 1661, whereby, for preventing and restraining the subscribing of Letters, Summonses, Precepts, and others, written by Unfreemen, and their Servants, to the Prejudice and Indignity of the Calling, it was enacted, " That no Writer should subscribe for Unfreemen, " and that every Writer should, in a Book at the Signet, cause all their Servants " subscribe by their Hand-write and Subscription, that they were actual Servants or " Prentices to such a Writer, and that the Writer should declare them to be his " Servants; and, at every Subscription of Letters, Summonses and others, should " subjoin, That such Letters were written by such a Servant or Prentice as did " write them". Notwithstanding whereof, divers of the Brethren have most unorderly frustrate the said Act, and the Good and Benefit of the Calling intended by it; in so far as it was affirmed, that some of the Brethren did colour Unfreemen, by taking them or their Servants into their Chambers, and by booking and owning them as if they were their own Servants and Prentices, and that others booked and owned Unfreemen's Servants, residing not in the Writers Chambers, but in their own Masters Chambers, by which their Masters and they bruiked the Benefit of privileged Writers; and that others did as unjustly abuse the Calling, by conducting with Agents, Clerks Servants, old Prentices, Notars and others, to write and subscribe all their Employments promiscuously during a set Time, for base Pensions, or base and naughty Prices, to the Reproach, Ruin and Contempt of the Society. As likewise it was represented, That the Writers were sometimes abused by their own Servants, who either, in their Masters Absence, or pretending that their Masters were absent, did procure Subscriptions to libelled Summonses and others, and defraud their Masters of the Benefit thereof: And the said Commissioners, and the whole Brethren being desirous to remove these base Practices and Disorders, they therefore, by Virtue of the Power and Authority committed to them by the Lord Secretary, with Consent of their whole Brethren, prohibite and discharge all and every one of the Writers to his Majesty's Signet, to acknowledge or own any Person or Persons whatsoever, as their Servants or Prentices, but such only as in very Deed and Truth, without all Fraud or Collusion, are their real and actual Prentices

and Servants, actually residing and writing in their Chambers, whose Writings and Employments, whether come in by themselves, or their Masters, redound wholly to the Profit and Benefit of their Masters, except the usual Drink-money. And likewise discharge and prohibit all the said Writers, and every one of them to make any Paction and Bargain with any Agents, Clerks Servants, Notars and others, Dependents on the College of Justice, or any in their Names, for Writing of their Employment, during any set Time, for Pensions, or at base and naughty Prices, beneath the ordinary Price now in use, to the Prejudice and Contempt of the Calling. And likewise prohibit and discharge all the Writers, that they nor any of them, except Commissioners, and such as are authorized to assist them in supplying the Absence of any of their Brethren, presume to subscribe for any absent Brother: And that no Commissioner, or others authorized, shall, upon Occasion or Pretence of a Brother's Absence, subscribe any Letters or Summons for him, unless his Servant who presents them have a written Warrant from the absent Master, particularly directed to any one or two, and not exceeding that Number in the Direction; and that the Subscriber keep a Note of what he subscribes, and deliver it to the absent Brother upon his Return, that he may call his Servants to an Account: with Certification to all such as transgress or contravene any Part of the Premises, they shall pay for the first Fault to the Treasurer of the Calling, for the Use of the Poor thereof, the Sum of Forty Pounds *Scots*, and for the second Fault, shall be deprived from their Offices *simpliciter*. And for the more effectual and vigorous Execution of this Act it is of Consent of the whole Body declared that it shall be lawful to the Procurator-fiscal in all Complaints to be founded upon the Contravention or Breach of this Act, to refer the samen to the Delinquent's Oaths of Verity, when he wants other Probation; and that they being lawfully cited by the ordinary Officer, personally apprehended, to compare before the Commissioners, to answer to the Complaint, and failzie to compare, or, comparing, refuse to depone, and purge themselves by their Oaths; which Oath, they of their own Consent hereby allow the Commissioners to administer, they shall be holden as confessed; which shall be as sufficient as if the Complaint were proven by Write or Witnesses. And ordain all the present Writers presently to subscribe this Act, in Testimony of their Assent and Submission thereto; and that all the intrant Writers subscribe the samen at their Admission, that it may have perpetual Observance, as that which so much concerns the Good and Well of the Calling. And ordain that every Writer have a Copy of thir Presents, under the Clerk's Hand, affixed publickly in their Chambers, that they nor their Servants may not pretend Ignorance hereof.

Apud Edinburgum 19th March 1694.

THE which Day the Keepers, Commissioners, and whole Body of the Writers to their Majesty's Signet, being met in the Parliament or New Session-house of *Edinburgh*, for the common Affairs of their Society, and taking to Consideration the many good Acts already made by them and their Predecessors, for redressing and rectifying the great Abuses that do daily abound in the Exercise of their Employment, both amongst themselves and their Servants, and the Agents and other Unfreemen, to the great Prejudice, Contempt and Indignity of the Calling, and which has given great Rise and Occasion to the several Forgeries of the Signet that have been lately discovered, and particularly the Act made the twenty second of *January* 1666; which Act, the Keepers and Commissioners, with Consent of the whole Brethren, do hereby ratify and revive in the Circumstances, and with the further Explanations after-mentioned: And therefore of new again prohibit and discharge all and every one of the Writers to their Majesty's Signet, present and to come, in all Time hereafter, in manner following; *Primo*, That they nor none of them presume to subscribe or sign for any Brother, either in Time of Session or Vacance, any Letters, Summonses, Signatures or Precepts (unless such as are at a Brother's own Instance) except Commissioners, or such as are or shall be authorized to assist them, who are also hereby discharged to subscribe for any Brother without a written Warrant subscribed by the Writer, condescending upon his Servants Names; and that he insert no Servant's Name in the said Warrant, but such as have paid their

their Ten Merks to the Treasurer for the Use of the Poor. And that the Commissioner or Assistant that shall so subscribe, shall set down the Letters he subscribes upon the Warrant; and which Warrant shall continue only for a Fortnight in time of Session, and for the whole Vacance: And that none present Letters to the Signet, or take them out, but these that are actual Servants or Prentices to a Writer to the Signet, and have paid their ten Merks. *Secundo*, That no Writer to the Signet shall form, write or subscribe any Summonses, Letters or Precepts passing the Signet to their Clients, Agents, or any other Person, for mean and naughty Prices, under the Allowance of the Act of Parliament; allowing Writers notwithstanding to write and sign for their own near Blood-Relations, and for their own Servants, and for Lords and Clerks of the Session, and Advocates, their own proper Employments *gratis*, if they please so to do, and for any others, not being Agents, whom they shall think fit also *gratis*, providing the same be not out of Design to frustrate the Intent of this and the said former Acts anent the Prices. *Tertio*, Appoint and ordain every Writer to cause his Prentices and Servants pay in their ten Merks to the Treasurer for the Use of the Poor, and to book them at the Signet, whether Prentice or Servant, within a Month after they enter to the Chamber, otherwise the Master to be liable for the Double thereof himself, and all his Letters to be stopped at the Signet till the same be paid; but Prejudice to the former Acts made anent their Payment, who are already Prentices or Servants preceeding this Date. And, *lastly*, The said Keeper and Commissioners, with consent of the whole Brethren, do also hereby ratify and revive the Act made in *Anno* 1594, whereby it is expressly statute, decerned and ordained, That none of the Writers to the Signet then present, or thereafter to come, write Letters upon any Warrants, written either by any other Writer, Advocate, their Servants or others whatsoever, or Precepts upon Signatures, except the said Warrant or Signature be written by themselves, or their own Servants in their own Chambers, except it be to supply his Brother's lawful Absence or Sicknes, testified to the Subscriber or Keeper of the Signet, under the Pain of Deprivation, at the least Suspension, or Payment of a pecuni- al Sum, at the Discretion of the Commissioners, in Manner specified in the Act. And, for the better Observance of the said Act, the said Keepers and Commissioners, and whole Brethren, do hereby, according to the several Acts formerly made, statute, decern and ordain, That every Writer to the Signet, present and to come, in all Time hereafter, mark all Signatures hereafter to be drawn by them, with their ordinary Subscriptions, with their own Hand, on the Back of the Signature, and subjoin thereto, that the same is written by such a Person, who is his real Servant, and Prentice who did write the same, as they do in other Letters passing the Signet; and no Signature be drawn or presented in Exchequer without the same be so marked and signed on the Back; and that the Writers shall punctually observe the said Acts, and all other Acts of the Calling according thereto, and under the Certifications and Penalties contained in the said former Acts; and that all present Writers shall subscribe this present Act, in place of the said former Acts hereby ratified and revived, in Testimony of their Assent and Subscription thereto; and that all intrant Writers subscribe the same at their Admission, that it may have perpetual Observance; and ordain thir Presents to be recorded, that every Writer have a Copy thereof under the Clerk's Hand, publicly affixed in their several Chambers, that none pretend Ignorance hereof. Likeas, the Keepers, Commissioners, with Consent of the whole Brethren, upon Consideration of the Act made the fourteenth Day of *May* 1610, That it should not be leisom to any Writer to the Signet to contain in one Letters any more Precepts than one, or any Decrees given by the Lords, Sheriffs, Baillies of Regalities, Baillies of Burghs, Contracts or Obligations, but one in every Letters, according as there are several Decrees, Precepts, Contracts or Obligations, whereby the Keepers of the Signet be not prejudged in the Duty of the Signet, nor the Writer in his Duty for every Letters; but that every Letters be written formally, and according to the Acts and Ordinances made thereanent, in manner specified in the said Act, do therefore of new enact, statute and ordain, That it shall not be leisom or lawful to a Writer to the Signet, present or to come, in any Time hereafter, to form Writs, sign or present to the Signet, any Letters of Horning containing more Decrees or Bonds than one; but that every Bond and Decree have a separate Horning, albeit the Precepts of inferior Courts

contain more Bonds or Decrets than one, and that every Horning have a separate Caption; excepting always frae this present Act all Bonds and Decrets not exceeding Forty Pounds *Scots* of principal Sum in every one of them; as also all Bonds granted by a Debitor to a Creditor, not being Assigny, in which Cases, or either of them, it shall be leifom to put in the Horning Two, Three, or more Bonds and Decrets, and to compone for the Causes at the Signet, at the Discretion of the Keepers; and thir Presents to commence only the first of *June* next to come, and recommend to the Keepers of the Signet and their Deputes, to see this Act punctually observed.

Edinburgh, 26th June 1699.

AT *Edinburgh*, the twenty sixth Day of *June*, One thousand six hundred and ninety nine Years: The which Day the Keeper, Commissioners, and whole Body of the Writers to the Signet, considering, That, notwithstanding of the many former Acts made by them and their Predecessors, for obviating and preventing Abuses in the Employment, yet Disorders do still continue and abound, to the Prejudice and Dishonour of the Society, do therefore, for the more effectual preventing and restraining Abuses in time coming, and to the effect the Lieges may be served by Writers to the Signet, who are qualified, tried and admitted, and that no other Writer or Agent, or any other Person, may impose upon the Lieges, or encroach upon the proper Employment and just Right of Writers to the Signet, not only ratify, approve, and confirm the Acts already made, to the Effect after specified; but also do hereby of new again statute, enact, appoint, and declare as follows, *viz. Imprimis*, That in time coming no Writer to the Signet shall own or acknowledge any Person or Persons whatsoever, as their Servants and Apprentices, but such only as are in very Deed and Truth, without all Fraud and Collusion, their real and actual Apprentices and Servants, actually residing and writing in their Chambers, and Servants to no others, and shall not subscribe any Bills, Signatures, Summonses, Letters, Precepts, Services before the Macers, or other Writs peculiar to the Writers to the Signet, but such as are written by themselves or their Servants and Apprentices foresaid, except allenarly such as shall be subscribed by any of them, at the Instance of these who are, or have been Brethren Writers to the Signet, (conform to a List of these who have been, to be signed by the Keeper and Commissioners) or such as shall be subscribed for them by the Commissioners, by virtue of a written Warrant: And that such Letters or other Writs be written by the Servants mentioned in the Warrant, for whom the Granters thereof shall be answerable; and that any Brother who shall subscribe for another, subjoin to the said Warrant a Note of the Letters so subscribed by him; and which Warrant is only to continue for Six Weeks after Date hereof.

Item, That no Writers to the Signet in time coming shall subscribe, or make any Paction or Bargain with any Person or Persons whatsoever, directly or indirectly, to subscribe any Letters, Summonses, Precepts, or other Writs above mentioned, peculiar to the Writers to the Signet, for less Prices than are allowed and established by the Act of Regulations 1672, or which may be established by any supervenient Act or Law, and shall not give back any Part of the same, nor any Gratification therefor, nor make Paction to frustrate or delay the Payment of their Accompts in consideration thereof.

Item, That in time coming Writers to the Signet, at or before Delivery and Up-giving of any of the Writs above mentioned, peculiar to the Writers to the Signet, subscribed by or for them, wherein they are employed directly or indirectly, by Agents or Writers within the Burgh of *Edinburgh* and Suburbs thereof, or any others within the Bounds foresaid, not being at their own Instance, shall receive actual Payment of their full Dues, conform to the Act of Regulations foresaid; and shall not directly or indirectly, by themselves or others, give back to the said Employers, or to any others on their Account, the said full Dues, or any Part thereof, or advance the Signet Dues, or give any Gratification of any

Sort,

Sort, whereby the Payment of the said full Dues may be frustrate any Manner of Way.

Item, That, notwithstanding of this or any former Act, it shall be leifom to any Writer, if he think fit, to sign Letters, Summonses, and others foresaid, at the Instance of the Secretaries of State and their Deputes, Lords of Session, Advocates, Clerks of Session, Clerks of the Bills, and their Deputes, Lords and Clerks of Treasury, Keepers and Writers to the Seals, Writers to the Signet, Clerks and Keepers of the general Register of Hornings and Safines, Macers before the Lords of Session, Privy Council and Exchequer, and the Writer his own Apprentices and Servants, (they not being Assignies) and those in the Poor's Roll, or such as are known to the Writer to be poor, *gratis*, if they please.

Item, That it shall be leifom to Writers to give Drink-money to their Apprentices and Servants above mentioned, for their writing of Letters, and others passing the Signet, not exceeding Forty Pennies *Scots per Sheet*, and that allenarly if the Master think fit.

Item, In case any Writer shall transgress or contravene any Part of the Premises, he shall be suspended for Three Months for the first Fault, and for the second Fault shall pay Forty Pounds *Scots*, and be suspended for other Three Months; and for the third Fault shall be deprived *simpliciter* from his Office.

Item, For the more exact and punctual Observance of the Premises, that each Writer, in the second Week of each Session, shall compear in the Writers Hall, before One or Two of the Commissioners, with the Procurator-fiscal and Clerk, and there shall solemnly swear and sign the Oath upon the Observance of this Act, conform to the *Formula* hereto subjoined, and which Oath and Deposition is to be insert in a Book to be kept at the Signet for that Effect; with Certification, that Letters and others passing the Signet, signed by or for any such Writer, who shall fail to compear and depone, as said is, shall, after the Diets above appointed are elapsed, be stopt at the Signet, hereby declaring them *ipso facto* suspended from their Office, until they swear and sign the said Oath.

Item, That the foresaid Oath shall be taken and administrate, as said is, in the second Week of *November* next, for the first Time, and so forth the second Week of each Session thereafter, without Prejudice always to the Procurator-fiscal to insist and pursue any who has contravened the former Acts, or shall contravene the same or thir Presents, at any Time, as accords.

Item, That the said Commissioners, or any Two of them, administrate the Oath foresaid, whereunto the hail Body of the Writers do hereby consent.

Item, To the effect this and former Acts, made for preventing Abuses, may be put to Execution, the said Keeper, Commissioners, and hail Body of the Writers, do hereby recommend and enjoin the Procurator-fiscal to make narrow and diligent Search after all Delinquencies, and prosecute the same; and that the Clerk discover to the Fiscal any Delinquencies that shall occur, or be known to him, as they will be answerable.

Item, That all the present Writers to the Signet, betwixt and the tenth Day of *July* next, and all Intrants at their Admission, shall sign this Act; and if they fail, appoint their Letters to be stopt at the Signet until they sign the same.

Follows the Form of the OATH.

I A. B. hereby solemnly swear and affirm, in Presence of Almighty God, that the above written Act, and the Act thereby ratified, has not been contravened or transgressed by me, in any Points thereof.

Edinburgh, 30th July 1716.

WHICH Day the Keeper and Commissioners ordered the Three Acts before written, contained in their old Sederunt book, to be fairly copied out by Robert Manson, in a new Book of half a Quire of Paper, to be signed by all such as shall be admitted Writers to the Signet after the Date hereof, and that there be for that End Three *Folio's* at least left blank betwixt each of the said Acts.

Edinburgh, 2d August 1717.

THE which Day the Keeper, Commissioners, and whole Body of the Writers to the Signet, taking to their Consideration an abusive Practice lately used by some Persons in defraud of the Signet, by razing of Summonses raised and signeted at the Instance of one Person, and by superinducing the Name of another Person, do therefore, for preventing the like Abuse in time coming, statute, enact and ordain, That from and after the sixth of *August 1717*, the Writers to the Signet shall immediately above their Subscriptions of Summonses, which are not warranted by Bill, insert with their own Hand the Name, Surname and Designation of the Pursuer; and if there are more Pursuers than one, shall add to the Designation of the first Pursuer these Words, *and others*; and the Keepers are hereby discharged to signet any Summons not passing by Warrant after the said sixth of *August 1717*, except such wherein the Pursuers are certified by the Writer who subscribes the same, in Manner above mentioned.

Edinburgh, 19th February 1722.

THE which Day the Keeper, Commissioners, and whole Body of the Writers to his Majesty's Signet, being met in the Parliament or new Session-house of *Edinburgh*, for the common Affairs and Concerns of their Society, taking into their serious Consideration, that, by the Neglect of putting the many good Acts made by them and their Predecessors, for the Good and Benefit of the Society, to due Execution, some unworthy Members of the Society have brought in several vile Practices, to the Reproach and Loss of the whole; and also considering, that, of all other Societies and Employments whatsoever, they are most liable to be abused by the Contravention of their Acts, by signing Writs peculiar to the Writers to the Signet, secretly, where no Witnesses are present, at least none who are subject or answerable to the Society; which Abuses require necessarily a proper Remedy and Restraint: Therefore the said Keeper, Commissioners, and whole Body of the Writers to the Signet, from a due Sense of the Abuses and Irregularities in the said Society, and for preventing and restraining them in time coming, and for maintaining and preserving the Credit, and just and legal Rights and Privileges of the Employment and Business of the Writers to the Signet, do hereby ratify, confirm, and approve the Act 26th *June 1699*, in the haill Heads, Articles, Tenors and Contents thereof, except in so far as the same is hereby altered in Manner under written, *viz.* That whereas, by the said Act 1699, the Writers to the Signet are prohibited to advance the Signet-dues of Letters, &c. wherein they are employed by Agents or Writers within the Burgh of *Edinburgh*, or Suburbs thereof, or any other within the Bounds foresaid, not being at their own Instance; yet it is hereby declared, That it may be lawful to the said Writers to the Signet to advance the said Signet-dues, provided that before delivering out, or giving up the said Letters and others, they be actually reimbursed of the said advanced Signet-dues, as well as paid of their own full Dues: That, besides subscribing Bills of Suspension and Advocation, Signatures, Precepts, and Services before the Macers, writ by the Writer to the Signet's own proper Servants, the Writers to the Signet be likewise obliged to draw the same by themselves, or their own proper Servants by their Direction; and that they sign none of the said Writs, drawn by any others than themselves, or their own proper Servants by their Direction, as said is, or written by any others than their own Servants; and that, over and above the Suspension of Three Months for the first Fault, each Delinquent shall pay to the Treasurer of the said Society, the Sum of Forty Pounds *Scots* Money; and that for the second Fault the Delinquent shall be suspended for Six Months, and pay Eighty Pounds of Fine, before the said Suspension shall be removed by the Keeper and Commissioners for the Time. And further, That in regard several Letters, Summonses, Precepts, and others passing the Signet, are signed by Brethren by virtue of another Brother's Warrant, without subjoining to the Warrant the Letters, Summonses, Precepts and others so signed, through which Neglect manifest Prejudices and Abuses do arise: Therefore, for preventing the like Abuses in time coming, it is hereby enacted, appointed and agreed, That each

each Brother signing for another, do subjoin a Note of the Letters, Summonses, Precepts, and others so signed by him, to the Warrant, mentioning the Sheets of which they severally consist, and bearing the Date of his signing; and that the Warrant be shewn to the Under-keeper of the Signet, when any such Letters, Summonses and Precepts are given in to be signet; and the Under-keeper is hereby prohibited and discharged to signet any such that are not so listed and subjoined. *Item*, That all absent Brothers be allowed to give Warrants for signing Letters, Summonses, Signatures, Precepts and others written by their Servants, mentioned in that Warrant, (Bills of Advocation and Suspension, and the Signatures and Precepts, being always drawn by the absent Brother or by the Signer, and written by the Servant of the absent Brother) which Warrants are to endure for three Months, and, upon the Expiration thereof, may be renewed for other Three Months, and no longer, they deponing in the Terms of this Act; and if their Absence continue longer than Six Months, they are hereby deprived of the Power of granting Warrants, unless the Cause of their Absence be signified to the Keeper and Commissioners, in an Application to them; and the Keeper and Commissioners do prorogate their Power for Three Months longer, provided all such Prorogations be subjoined to the Warrant, and signed by the Keeper for the Time. And further, for the more certain and regular Execution of the said Act, it is hereby enacted, appointed and agreed to, That each Writer to the Signet shall, upon the first *Monday* of *July*, and also upon the first *Monday* of *December* yearly, compare before the Keeper and Commissioners for the Time of the said Society, or any two of them, and make Oath conform to the *Formula* hereto subjoined; and all such as shall not do so, at least within Thirty Days after the said first *Monday* of *July* and *December*, his or their Letters shall be stopt at the Signet, ay and till they purge themselves by Oath, as is above specified; and appoint and agree, that this Act take Effect from and after the nineteenth Day of *February*, which is the Date of thir Presents, and the first Diet of Purgation, be upon the first *Monday* of *July* next to come, and so forth thereafter, as is above appointed. *Item*, That when any Member is suspended, in case he shall thereafter apply to the Keeper and Commissioners for removing the Suspension, before the elapsing of the said three Months, or Six Months *respectively*, in case the Keeper and Commissioners shall think fit to repon him within the said Time, he shall, before he be so reponed, pay the respective Fines above-mentioned to the Treasurer for the Time, the one half to the Assistant under the Procurator-fiscal, and the other half to the Treasurer, for the Use and Relief of the Poor of the Society: And in case the Suspension of any Member do proceed upon any Malverse other than a bare Omission, before he be reponed, he shall not only pay the said Sum, but also shall be listed the last of the Writers in the Roll for the Time. *Item*, For preventing of the Abuses that may be done to the Society, by other People who have not the Privilege of writing and expeding Signatures in Exchequer, and Advocations and Suspensions, the Procurator-fiscal, and the Assistant under him, are hereby ordered and ordained to prosecute the Presenter of Signatures, if he shall take in any Signatures, not signed by a Writer to the Signet in the Terms of the Act of Parliament; and the Clerks of the Bills, and their Deputes, if they shall take in Bills of Suspension or Advocation not signed by a Writer to the Signet, according to the Direction of the Act of Sederunt of the Lords of Session, by a summar Complaint to the Lords of Session, or in such other Manner as by the Law will be most effectual to correct these Abuses, and that by the Direction of the Keeper and Commissioners; and the Treasurer to the Society is hereby impowered and ordained to pay to the Procurator-fiscal all the Expences of such Prosecutions, by Direction aforesaid. *Item*, That Three of the Writers to the Signet, not being Commissioners, be named by a general Meeting of the Writers to the Signet, to be held twice in the Year, *viz.* on the second *Monday* of *June*, and the second *Monday* of *November*, to visit the Chambers of the Writers to the Signet, and to give Information to the Procurator-fiscal of any Contravention they find of this present Act, or any others, to the end he may prosecute the Delinquents before the Keeper and Commissioners. And *John Hamilton*, *John Ewen*, and *Alexander Farquharson*, are hereby named *pro hac vice*, to execute the said Office of Visitors till the next general Meeting, which is to be upon the second *Monday* of *June* next. And moreover, it being convenient, for the Execution of this Act, and all other Acts against Delinquents, that an Assistant be appointed under the Procurator-fiscal for the Time, for discovering of Abuses in the said Employment, and Contraventions of this Act, or any other Acts of the

the said Society now in Force, and for procuring Information against the said Delinquents; and being of Opinion, that *William Roy* Writer in *Edinburgh*, is a proper Person, therefore they recommend to the Keeper and Commissioners, to nominate and appoint him, during their Pleasure, to be Assistant to the Effect foresaid; and, for his Encouragement, do allow to him the just and equal half of all Fines to be imposed upon Delinquents and Contraveeners of the Acts of the said Society, and the other half of the said Fines to be paid to the Treasurer of the Society, for the Use of the Poor thereof. And also enact and appoint, that all and every one of the present Writers do subscribe these Presents, upon or before the Day of _____ next to come, or otherwise appoint the Underkeeper of the Signet to stop their Letters until they sign the same. And likewise, that each In-
trant, at or before his Admission, do sign this present Act. And that none may pretend Ignorance, it is hereby ordered, that the Treasurer cause print these Presents, and that Three printed Copies thereof be delivered by the Officer to each Member.

Follows the Form of the OATH.

I A. B. hereby solemnly swear and affirm, in Presence of Almighty God, That the above written Act, and the Act thereby ratified, has not been contravened or transgressed by me, in any Points thereof, since the nineteenth Day of February 1722.

Edinburgh 19th March 1722.

THe which Day, the Keeper, and Commissioners for the Writers to the Signet, taking into their Consideration an Act of the Society, bearing Date the Fourteenth *May* 1610 Years, whereby it is statute and appointed, " That it should not be leifum to any Writer to the Signet, to contain in Letters passing the Signet, any more Precepts, Decreets, Contracts or Obligations than one, whereby the Keeper of the Signet be not prejudged in the Duty of the Signet, nor the Writer of his Dues: " As also, another Act, of the Date the Nineteenth Day of *March* 1694, whereby it is enacted, statute and ordained, " That it shall not be leifum or lawful to a Writer to the Signet, to form, write, sign, or present to the Signet, any Letters of Horning, containing more Decreets or Bonds than one but that every Bond and Decreet have a separate Horning, albeit the Precepts of inferior Courts contain more Bonds or Decreets than one; and that every Horning have a separate Caption. Excepting always all Bonds and Decreets not exceeding Forty Pounds *Scots* of principal Sum in every one of them: As also, all Bonds granted by the same Debitor to the same Creditor, not being Assigny. In which Cases, or either of them, it shall be leifum to put in the Horning, Two, Three or more Bonds and Decreets, and to compone for the Causes at the Signet, at the Discretion of the Keeper, " as is more fully mentioned, in the said two Acts. Which two Acts *respective* above mentioned, the Keeper and Commissioners do hereby not only ratify and approve, but also do statute, enact, and appoint, That each protested Bill of Exchange, and each protested inland Bill or Precept, shall have a separate Horning and Caption, albeit that the said Protests may happen to contain more Bills or Precepts than one, in the same Manner as is appointed with respect to Decreets, Bonds or Precepts, by the Acts above mentioned, excepting in the Cases above specified: And appoint this Act to commence and take Effect from the Date hereof; and recommend to the Keeper of the Signet and his Deputes, to see this Act punctually observed, and appoint the same to be printed, and a Copy thereof to be given to each Writer to the Signet.

July 2d 1722.

THe which Day the Keeper of his Majesty's Signet, and Commissioners for the Writers to the Signet, taking into their Consideration, That by an Act of this Society, bearing Date the _____ Day of *December* 1594, it is Enacted, " That the Examination of all intrans Writers should thereafter be in full Convention of _____ " the

“ the Commissioners.” That by the Acts thirty first *July* 1610, and twenty third *February* 1629, it is enacted, “ That no Person should be admitted Writer to the Signet, unless he had served as an Apprentice to one of the Brethren for seven Years.” That by the Acts Twenty third *February* 1629, and Second *March* 1656, “ Intrans Writers before their Admission should be of the Age of Twenty five Years compleat.” And that by another Act of the Sixth *July* 1671, “ The Examination and Qualifications of Intrans Writers was again settled in the Manner therein exprest.” The said Keeper and Commissioners taking also to their Consideration, that by the not Observance and putting in Execution the said Acts anent the Qualifications, Trial and Admission of Intrans Writers, several Abuses have crept in, and several Persons have been admitted to the Office of ordinary Writers to the Signet, who were noways intitled thereto, to the great Detriment and Discouragement of others, who were intitled in the Terms of the said Acts: Therefore the said Keeper and Commissioners have ratified, approved and confirmed, and hereby ratify, approve and confirm the above Acts, in the haill Heads, Articles and Clauses thereof; with and under the Alterations, Restrictions and Additions after-exprest, *viz.* That every Candidate for the Office of a Writer to the Signet, shall have served at least three Years by written Indentures, with a Writer to the Signet, and be obliged to produce such Indentures, with a Discharge thereof to the Keeper and Commissioners, before he can be admitted to Trial, except the Sons of Writers to the Signet, who shall serve their Fathers at least for the Space of three Years, whether with or without Indentures.

That the Candidate shall be of good Fame and Reputation, and that he may be examined and admitted in Time of Vacance, Summer or Winter Sessions: That the Candidate shall pay such Sum or Sums of Money to the Treasurer of the Society, for the Use of the Poor thereof, as by the Acts of the Society, made or to be made, shall be due at the Time, and report the Treasurer's Discharge thereof, before he can be admitted to Trial: But if he be not found qualified, his Money shall be returned to him by the Treasurer, except Ten Merks payable by him as an Apprentice; which shall be then paid, if not paid formerly, and shall not be returned in any Event.

That the Nomination of Examinators and Procurator-fiscal, and Manner of Examination, shall in all Time coming be as follows, *viz.* That the Keeper and Commissioners upon the second *Monday* of *November* next to come, shall name and appoint five Commissioners to be Examinators, whereof three to be a *Quorum*, and one Commissioner to be the Procurator-fiscal for the succeeding Year; and so forth name the like Number of new Examinators and Procurator-fiscal upon each second *Monday* of *November* yearly thereafter for each succeeding Year.

That the Examinators and Procurator-fiscal shall give their Oaths *de fidei*, That betwixt the Remit in order to Trial, and the Examination, six Days shall at least interveen, to which Day appointed for Trial, all the Commissioners shall be cited, and obliged to attend in the Writers Hall, under the Penalty of Half-a-crown, to be levied of each absent. That they shall not proceed to Trial, unless a full *Quorum* of the Commissioners be present. That at least three of the Examinators shall be obliged to examine the Candidate in Presence of the Keeper and other Commissioners.

That it shall however be lawful to any other of the Commissioners present to put such Questions to the Candidate as they shall think fit; That the whole Examination shall be at one Dyet in the said Hall: And that after Examination is over, the Candidate shall be removed, and the Vote shall be stated, *Qualified to be an ordinary Writer to the Signet or not?* And the Question shall be determined by Plurality of Votes.

And the said Keeper and Commissioners hereby name and appoint Mr. *James Anderson*, *John Inglis*, Mr. *James Baillie*, *Ronald Campbell* and *Alexander Glas* interim Examinators, from the Date hereof, until the said second *Monday* of *November* next to come; reserving nevertheless Power to the Keeper and Commissioners, or their *Quorum*, to admit to Trial, in the Manner appointed by this present Act, any Candidate, who before his being admitted to Trial, shall prove before the said Keeper and Commissioners, or their said *Quorum*, to their Satisfaction, That he the said Candidate served a Writer to the Signet, for at least three Years preceeding the Date hereof, though without Indentures; but declaring, That

the said Power shall determine and expire upon the last Day of *December* 1723 Years.

And whereas Indentures entred into before making of this Act, and now current, may be for one Year or two, it is in that Case hereby enacted, That such Indentures shall not intitle the Apprentice to ask or obtain the Office of a Writer to the Signet, unless he add thereto, and truly serve with his Master, or with another Writer to the Signet, so much more Time by additional Indentures, as will make up in all three full Years, before he can be admitted to Trial; excepting the Sons of Writers to the Signet, in manner before excepted.

And, *lastly*, It is hereby declared that the Keeper and Commissioners may hereafter admit any to be a Writer to the Signet, who shall have served his Apprenticeship in manner above-written, and who shall, upon Examination and Trial in manner above-exprest, be found qualified, as said is, albeit the said Apprentice be under the Age of twenty five Years at the Time.

2d *January* 1727.

THe which Day the Keeper and Commissioners, and whole Body of the Writers to his Majesty's Signet, being met in the Parliament or New Session-house of *Edinburgh*, for the common Affairs and Concern of the Society, taking into their serious Consideration, That by the Neglect of putting the many good Acts made by them and their Predecessors, for the Good and Benefit of the Society, anent Apprentices and Writers Servants, and recording their Indentures to due Execution, some unwary Members thereof, have, as is informed, brought in unbecoming Practices, by covering the Servants of Agents and other Unfreemen, and have proceeded in this worthless Practice, so far as to enter into Indentures with the said Servants of Agents, and other Writers, Unfreemen, albeit they neither give their pretended Master any due Service, nor reside nor write in his Office or Chamber, and that in open Breach of, and downright Opposition to the several laudable Laws and Acts of the Society, particularly hereafter mentioned, made in that Behalf, *viz.* the Acts of the 13th *March* 1655, the 14th of *November* 1661, the 22d *February* 1666, the 19th of *March* 1694, the 26th of *June* 1699 and 19th of *February* 1722. For preventing of which Abuses in Time coming, without Prejudice to the several Acts of the Society anent recording of Indentures, giving up Lists of Apprentices, and Payment of their Ten Merks for the Use of the Poor, hereafter mentioned, *viz.* the Acts of the 31st *July* 1610, the 16th of *May* 1611, the 28th of *December* 1627, the 23d of *June* 1628, the 23d of *February* 1629, the 30th of *April* 1630, the 9th of *January* 1647, the 8th of *May* 1649, the 13th of *March* 1655, the 2d of *March* 1656, the 14th of *November* 1661, the 1st of *February* 1664, the 22d of *February* 1666, the 19th of *March* 1694, the 26th of *June* 1699, and 19th of *February* 1722, except in as far as the samen are hereby altered and innovate. The Keeper, Commissioners, and whole Body aforesaid, have of new statute, enacted and ordained, and hereby of new statute, enact and ordain, That each Writer to the Signet, shall, within the Space of sixty Days after the Date of any Indenture, for hereafter to be past and expedie betwixt him and any Apprentice, exhibite and present the said Indentures to one of three Commissioners for the Writers to the Signet, to be named from Time to Time, in all Time coming, by the Keeper and Commissioners for that Purpose, in the Writers Hall: And the said Indentures being so exhibited and presented, ordain an Abstract or Abbreviate thereof to be made, bearing the Date of the samen, the Prentice-fee, if any be stipulate, with the Master's Name, Sirname and Designation, and the Name, Sirname and Designation of the Apprentice, and the Time he is to serve; and the Abstract so made, to be entred and registrated by the Clerk of the Society for the Time being, in the Records of the Society, for which One Pound ten Shillings *Scots* Money shall be paid by the Apprentice to the said Clerk, and Twelve Shillings *Scots* to the Officer of the Society for the Time, as formerly, with an Addition of One Pound four Shillings *Scots* to the Extracter, and these in full of all Dues: And this they ordain under the Penalty of One hundred Merks to be paid by the Master for the first Fault, One hundred Pounds *Scots* and Suspension for three Months for the second Fault; and

and the Master's Letters to be stopt for these Penalties, for both first and second Faults, until Payment, and under the Penalty of Deprivation for the third Fault. And ordain the said Master to cause his Apprentice, at the time of recording the said Abstract or Abbreviate, to pay in to the Treasurer of the Society for the time, for the Use and Behoof of the Poor the Sum of Ten Merks *Scots* Money, conform to the ancient Acts above recited, unless the same has been formerly paid. Likeas the Keeper, Commissioners, and whole Body aforesaid, statute, enact and ordain, That the Day of presenting and recording the Abstract aforesaid, be marked on the Back of the Indenture by the Clerk, and subscribed by the Commissioner, before whom the samen is presented, and that at the Time of presenting; and that no Indenture hereafter to be past and expedite betwixt any Master and any Apprentice, shall intitle the said Apprentice to the Privilege of being examined or admitted Writer to the Signet, unless they are presented, recorded and indorsed as this Act directs. Moreover, the Keeper, Commissioners, and whole Body aforesaid, do hereby statute, enact and ordain, That every Person who shall hereafter petition to be admitted Writer to the Signet, shall, before Admission to Trial, exhibite to the Keeper and Commissioners his Indenture discharged, and swear and depone that the samen was truly subscribed of the Date or Dates it bears, and that he truly served the Master therein-mentioned and none others during the Time, and in terms of the said Indenture, otherwise he shall not be admitted to Trial. And, *lastly*, The Keeper, Commissioners, and whole Body aforesaid, ordain this Act to be insert and ingrossed in the ordinary Record of the Society to be signed by the Members thereof; and all Intrants, as there shall be Occasion, in Obedience to this Act in Time coming: And appoint the Treasurer to cause print this Act; and recommend to the Keeper to cause affix the same upon the Wall of the Signet-office, that none may pretend Ignorance, and that two Copies thereof be given out to each Member of the Society.

13th June 1737, *Act explaining the Act 19th March 1722.*

THe which Day the Keeper and Commissioners, upon a Difficulty moved by *Archibald Campbell* their Clerk, Whether, where there are more Bonds and Bills than one above Forty Pounds, and not the same Debitor and Creditor, in one Decreet, either of the Court of Session, or inferior Decreets, the same can be contained in one Horning? And if they can, whether they pay Causes? Were unanimously of Opinion, that they can be in one Horning, though never so many, but that they pay Causes; the Meaning of the Words, *More Decreets and Bonds in Precepts of inferior Courts in the Act thereanent*, being Precepts on Decreets, or Extracts containing fundry Bonds.

23d January 1738.

THe Keeper and Commissioners taking into Consideration, That by the Acts of the Society, Apprentices to Writers to the Signet, that serve under Indentures, are obliged to enter the samen in the Books of the Society, within sixty Days after the Date thereof; notwithstanding whereof, the same are frequently omitted, which occasions fundry Applications, and thereby fills up the Book kept for that Purpose: Therefore, for the future, for such Neglect, they ordered and appointed such Person so neglecting, shall not only pay the common Fees for recording, but also pay five Shillings *Sterling* more, one half thereof to the Extracter, and the other Half to the Poor.

And they likewise taking into Consideration, That in the Act for recording Indentures, there is no Provision for recording the Names of Sons of Writers to the Signet who enter to their Fathers Service, and the Time of Commencement of their Service, do therefore appoint that in all time coming, the Name and Time of Commencement of the Service of any Writer's Son, shall be signed by him and his Father, and presented and recorded in the same Manner as other Indentures are, and under the like Certification as contained in this Act.



